

**To:** Robbins, Chris[Robbins.Chris@epa.gov]; Kavlock, Robert[Kavlock.Robert@epa.gov]  
**From:** Blackburn, Elizabeth  
**Sent:** Wed 2/15/2017 4:37:01 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Trump Eyes EPA Visit To Announce Limits On Agency After Pruitt Sworn In

Expect a call from Shannon. She says this is close hold.

Liz Blackburn

Chief of Staff

EPA Office of Research and Development

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**From:** Kenny, Shannon  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:53 AM  
**To:** Blackburn, Elizabeth <Blackburn.Elizabeth@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Trump Eyes EPA Visit To Announce Limits On Agency After Pruitt Sworn In

Hi, this is close hold. I will give them a ring.

Shannon

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 15, 2017, at 10:30 AM, Blackburn, Elizabeth <[Blackburn.Elizabeth@epa.gov](mailto:Blackburn.Elizabeth@epa.gov)> wrote:

Hi Shannon

Bob/Chris were curious whether we have any more information about this article below.

Thanks for any intel.

Liz

Liz Blackburn

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## **Trump Eyes EPA Visit To Announce Limits On Agency After Pruitt Sworn In**

February 14, 2017

President Donald Trump plans to visit EPA headquarters to sign executive orders (EOs) aimed at scaling back the agency's climate change and other work, but is waiting until after the expected confirmation and swearing in of agency Administrator-nominee Scott Pruitt, an administration source says.

The president will visit agency headquarters to conduct a ceremonial swearing in of Pruitt, the outgoing Oklahoma attorney general (AG), possibly as soon as next week depending on when the Senate confirms him. Democrats are expected to almost universally oppose him -- with the notable exception of Sen. Joe Manchin (WV) -- though barring any surprise GOP defections, he appears to have enough votes to be confirmed.

The administration source would not share the content or number of the EPA-related EOs, but did say they are intended to send a message that Pruitt is ready to get to work and that they could "suck the air out" of the room.

The source also says that one of the drafted EOs will be directed at the State Department rather than EPA, suggesting that it is related to U.S. participation in the international Paris Agreement or another global environmental issue.

The orders are expected to dramatically scale back the agency's climate change work, and could revoke former President Barack Obama's Climate Action Plan, which is an administration-wide blueprint that lays out regulatory and voluntary measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

Another order could direct EPA to begin the process of revoking the Clean Power Plan (CPP) and related new source performance standards to reduce power sector GHGs.

### **Pruitt Nomination**

But it is unclear when Pruitt might get a Senate vote, leaving the timing of Trump's visit EPA uncertain. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) announced that Pruitt is second in a queue of six Cabinet officials to move to the Senate floor this week.

First up is controversial White House Office of Management & Budget Director-nominee Mick Mulvaney. That process could take until the evening of Feb. 16, assuming that Democrats use the full 30 hours of debate as they have for several previous Cabinet picks. That raises the question of whether senators would have enough time to vote on Pruitt before they leave for Congress' President's Day recess on Feb. 17.

Also, Democrats on the Senate environment committee are urging McConnell to delay Pruitt's vote, saying senators should wait until after an Oklahoma court holds an "emergency" hearing on a suit seeking documents from his tenure as AG.

The administration source says Vice President Mike Pence intends to conduct a rapid-fire swearing in Feb. 17 of whichever nominees get through this week, and that Pruitt is currently expected to have his first day on the job at EPA Feb. 17. That day, he would sign an ethics recusal letter, set up his email accounts and take care of other housekeeping tasks.

Pruitt is expected to seek to focus on traditional areas of EPA work, and is said to be most interested in looking first at the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act implementation, brownfields and cooperative federalism, the source says.

As soon as the week of Feb. 20, Trump would then come to EPA to conduct the ceremonial swearing in and sign EPA-related EOs, the source says. The source adds that the White House could also change the plan.

### **Trump's Orders**

The source says Trump's planned EPA visit is envisioned as similar to the president's Pentagon trip Jan. 27 after Defense Secretary James Mattis was formally sworn in on Jan. 20. At that visit, Trump signed his "extreme vetting" immigration EO, which has been stayed by federal courts, as well as a second order on military readiness.

Top Trump EPA transition team official Myron Ebell, who has since returned to the free-market Competitive Enterprise Institute, told Inside EPA Feb. 7 that he envisioned the repeal of EPA's climate programs would be presented as a package contained in an EO or several EOs. Those orders could, for example, tell EPA to reconsider its new and existing power plant GHG rules, rescind or forbid the use of the social cost of carbon as a measure of such rules' benefits, and announce a schedule for undoing the rest of the Climate Action Plan.

Ebell also expects an order telling EPA to reopen the Clean Water Act jurisdiction rule.

"I am not sure when in the pecking order" this comes for Trump, but "I expect to see something as a package," he said.

Ebell added that he expects an effort to undo the GHG endangerment finding but not as part of the initial actions.

Another possible approach for Trump's EPA-related orders is contained in a four-part recommendation from a group of AGs and environmental regulators from 24 states to the Trump administration and the GOP-controlled Congress to withdraw the CPP and ensure that "similar or more extreme proposals never again take shape."

The recommendations were in a Dec. 15 letter organized by West Virginia AG Patrick Morrisey (R) and Texas AG Ken Paxton (R) that advised Trump to issue an EO on his first day in office rescinding Obama's memorandum that directed EPA to issue the CPP, and instruct the agency to "take no further action to enforce or implement the rule," which is stayed and under court review.

### **Presidential Visits**

Both Obama and his predecessor, President George W. Bush, visited EPA once during their two terms. President Bill Clinton never visited the agency, though President George H.W. Bush did.

Obama visited EPA on Jan. 10, 2012, where he expressed appreciation for the vital work done by the staff, according to a [White House transcript of his remarks](#). Obama pledged to stand by EPA and said, "I want you to know that you've got a president who is grateful for your work and will stand with you every inch of the way as you carry out your mission to make sure that we've got a cleaner world."

Bush visited EPA on May 23, 2005, to witness the swearing in of Administrator Stephen Johnson, in a bid to [boost sagging agency morale at the time](#).

However, his visit only further undermined morale, agency sources said at the time, and was seen as further hampering Johnson's ability to push the administration's agenda within the agency. Johnson was the first career employee elevated to administrator. -- Dawn Reeves ([dreeves@iwpnews.com](mailto:dreeves@iwpnews.com))